

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: EEC, PO

SUBJECT: EC/PORTUGAL RELATIONS

REF: EC BRUSSELS 9502

1. MISS NIELSEN, WHO FOLLOWS EC/PORTUGUESE AFFAIRS IN THE EC
COMMISSION DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS,
HAS INFORMED US THAT DESPITE THE CURRENT UNCERTAINTIES
SURROUNDING THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN PORTUGAL, THE EC COMMISSION
IS GOING AHEAD WITH ITS EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC WAYS
IN WHICH THE COMMUNITY MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST THE PORTUGUESE
ECONOMY. MISS NIELSEN SAYS THE
MEETINGS OF THE JOINT EC/PORTUGAL WORKING GROUPS REFERRED
TO IN PARA 4 REFTEL TOOK PLACE (PRIOR TO THE RECENT TURN
OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL) AND WENT QUITE WELL. THE PORTUGUESE SIDE
HAD DONE ITS HOMEWORK AND WAS ABLE TO REFINE ITS DESIDERATA
REGARDING EC ASSISTANCE IN THE COMMERCIAL, AGRICULTURAL AND
INDUSTRIAL SECTORS INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR FAVORABLE
TREATMENT FOR CERTAIN PORTUGUESE

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PRODUCTS IN EC MARKETS AND PROTECTION AGAINST EC EXPORTS

OF OTHER PRODUCTS TO PORTUGAL. THE PORTUGUESE ALSO SPELLED OUT SOME OF THE IMPROVEMENTS THEY SEEK FOR THEIR MIGRANT LABORERS IN THE COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS THEIR DESIRES WITH REGARD TO A FINANCIAL PROTOCOL PROVIDING FOR EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK LOANS. NO FIGURES WERE MENTIONED, HOWEVER.

2. THE COMMISSION IS NOW PREPARING ITS POSITIONS FOR A MEETING OF THE EC/PORTUGAL MIXED COMMITTEE WHICH IS STILL SCHEDULED FOR SOME TIME IN APRIL. IT IS UP TO THE PORTUGUESE SIDE TO CONFIRM THAT DATE, BUT MISS NIELSEN DOUBTS THAT THE PORTUGUESE WILL BE PREPARED TO MAKE A FIRM DECISION PRIOR TO THEIR ELECTIONS, NOW SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 25. EVEN THOUGH THE MIXED COMMITTEE MEETING MIGHT HAVE TO BE POSTPONED, THE COMMISSION IS GOING AHEAD WITH ITS PREPARATIONS. IT WISHES TO ENSURE THAT IF THERE IS ANY SLIPPAGE IN THE SCHEDULE, IT WILL NOT BE BECAUSE THE COMMISSION FAILED TO COMPLETE ITS WORK ON TIME.

3. WHILE THE COMMISSION IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS VIS-A-VIS PORTUGAL, MISS NIELSEN SAID SHE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL OBSTACLES. IN PARTICULAR, SHE FORESEES THE POSSIBILITY THAT A LEFTIST-ORIENTED PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT MIGHT EITHER DECIDE TO DOWN-PLAY ITS TIES TO THE EC OR TAKE SOME RESTRICTIVE ACTION, SUCH AS A BAN ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT, WHICH WOULD VIRTUALLY FORECLOSE THE EC'S EFFORTS TO PURSUE CLOSER COOPERATION FOR THE TIME BEING. GREENWALD

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